

**Pre-Council Meeting
New Logo/Communications Strategy for
Lincoln Parks & Recreation Dept.
May 11, 2009 - 10:30 a.m.**

Council Members Present: Eschliman, Camp, Cook, Emery and Svoboda

Lynn Johnson, Director of Parks & Recreation, said the department is responsible for generating \$2.5 million in revenue. For next fiscal year, they are anticipating this could approach \$3 million.

Their primary method of communication regarding programs/facilities has been the department's program brochure published and distributed three times a year. For many years the program guide was inserted into the newspaper for distribution. In 2000, as part of a comprehensive survey they asked how people would like to receive information and a majority indicated they would like to receive information by direct mail. The department then changed to mailing the brochure to 100,000 households three times a year at a cost of about \$35,000 per mailing.

In the Fall of 2008, they had the opportunity to work with a senior cap-stone course in marketing and public relations taught by Stacey James to develop a marketing/communications strategy for the department. Students developed research tools to gain insight into how community residents view P&R facilities/programs, and how they would like to access information. Their findings were: 1) community residents believe that P&R facilities/programs are relevant and they are interested in accessing information about these facilities/programs; 2) the current logos in use are not readily identifiable; 3) the department website is cluttered and not easy to use; and 4) residents would like to access and receive information via electronic communications.

- The student teams recommended developing and branding a new logo and tag line, developing a new website, and developing and implementing an electronic communications strategy. Over the last 5 months, the department has been working with a consultant team to
 - develop a new logo and tag line for the P&R Department that are fresh and have a visual relationship to the logo used by the Lincoln Parks Foundation;
 - develop a new visually attractive and engaging website that will be housed within the Interlinc system but will have an address for direct access;
 - develop a marketing strategy to launch the new logo, tag line and website. This launch will include:
 1. A news conference on May 21
 2. An annual report in the Neighborhood Extra on May 23
 3. Public Service Announcements
 4. Ads in Free Times, Neighborhood Extra, Journal Star on-line web site, and 'L' Magazine
 5. Radio interviews and advertising
 6. Billboards (display space is being donated)
 7. StarTran bus panels (display space is being donated)
 8. Cinema slides at The Grand and The Ross theaters
 9. Renewing Channel 5 programming and info-ads.

The cost of the "launch" is less than the cost of producing and delivering the Parks & Recreation Summer Program Guide. In fact, the cost is less than mailing a postcard to each household in Lincoln.

By year's end, the department plans to have all facility reservations and program registrations available on-line and have an e-postcard communication system in place. They will also be exploring electronic social-networking as a communication tool.

In tandem with development of the new department log, tag line and electronic communications strategy, the department is working to expand resource development activities. Resource development activities are being developed with partnership with the Lincoln Parks Foundation and include:

- an expanded and enhanced volunteer program, which will be available on-line;
- partnering with the Lincoln Community Foundation to promote and secure planned and legacy gifts;
- greater promotion of current programs to build endowment funds for community icons;
- development and promotion of new programs to build endowment funds for parks, trails and public trees; and
- development and promotion of a Wish List.

The department will reach out to community organizations, service clubs and businesses regarding volunteer opportunities and continue to promote endowment programs and planned/legacy giving. They will also develop funding strategies including private donations for renovation of Centennial Mall and replacement restrooms and support facilities at Sherman Field.

Meeting adjourned 10:55 a.m.